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Calgary Board
of Education

Opportunity Profile

Manager, Labour Relations

Location: Calgary



About Calgary Board of Education

cbe.ab.ca

The Calgary Board of Education (CBE) is one of Canada's largest and most complex public school systems. With more than 142,000 students enrolled across over 250 schools, and a workforce of more than 16,000 employees, the CBE operates at a scale that rivals many mid-sized corporations in organizational complexity, labour relations depth, and operational consequence.

The CBE's employee community is one of the most diverse in Alberta's public sector. It encompasses certificated teachers represented by the Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA), as well as a broad range of non-certificated and support staff represented by the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) and other bargaining units. The organization navigates a multi-union environment within a framework shaped by Alberta Education legislation and the bargaining model that governs teacher collective agreements in Alberta.

Labour relations at the CBE is a strategic function. The School Board's ability to recruit, retain, and engage a high-performing workforce directly determines outcomes for students. Constructive, trust-based relationships with union partners, proactive dispute resolution, fair and consistent application of collective agreements, and rigorous workforce planning are all prerequisites for fulfilling the CBE's Education Plan that aligns every employee to the goal of student success.

Our Mission

Each student, in keeping with their individual abilities and gifts, will complete high school with a foundation of learning necessary to thrive in life, work, and continued learning.

Our Values

Students come first.
Learning is our central purpose.
Public education serves the common good.

The Opportunity

The Calgary Board of Education is at an inflection point in the maturity of its people strategy. Under the leadership of the HR Superintendent, the CBE is investing in a strategic Labour and Employee Relations function that moves away from reactive collective agreement administration and issue management toward a proactive, organizationally integrated capability with a strategic focus. This is a meaningful evolution: recognizing that in a complex, multi-union environment serving over 142,000 students, the quality of labour-management relationships is a strategic imperative.

The incoming **Manager, Labour Relations** will be a hands-on builder, someone with both the technical depth and the leadership presence to establish this function with credibility, structure, and long-term impact.



This leader will be tasked with building a Labour and Employee Relations strategy and function that serves as the organization in identifying emerging workforce tensions before they become formal disputes, and continuing established trust-based relationships with union partners that create room for collaborative problem-solving, balanced with the School Board's right and interests. The Labour and Employee Relations team will equip frontline and senior leaders with the knowledge and confidence to manage within collective agreement frameworks consistently and fairly, reducing organizational risk.

During bargaining, the Manager, Labour Relations will bring rigour and foresight to the bargaining table, grounding the CBE's negotiating positions in labour market data, financial sustainability, and a deep understanding of the interests of all parties. Well in advance of negotiations, this role will develop a proactive labour relations strategy and bargaining approach that ensures the organization enters bargaining with clear priorities and a thoughtful plan aligned to organizational goals and relationship considerations.

This role provides strategic direction to the Human Resources service unit and the Calgary Board of Education's (CBE) leaders, ensuring high-quality, consistent, and timely delivery of ER and LR services across the CBE. Working in direct partnership with the Manager, of HR Advisory Services, this role is accountable for the development and ongoing implementation of the CBE's labour and employee relations strategy, providing system-wide leadership and the organization's response to complex labour and employee relations matters.

This role manages and oversees complex investigations, grievances, and arbitrations, ensuring compliance with legislation, collective agreements, and organizational policies. As the escalation point for high-risk cases, this role strengthens HR's capacity to address employee and labour relations issues consistently, fairly, and in a timely manner, while fostering respectful workplace practices and maintaining constructive relationships with unions and association partners. This role will also manage a small team of LR professionals.

Accountability

Reporting to the Director, Labour Relations, HR Advisory Services, and Employee Health & Well-Being, and working in close partnership with the Manager, HR Advisory, this leader is accountable to:

- Provide system-wide leadership and expertise on complex employee and labour relations matters.
- Develop and implement a labour relations strategy for the CBE.
- Lead and manage the collective bargaining process for all collective agreements, including strategy development, bargaining preparation, bargaining with the unions, and implementation.
- Oversee investigations, grievance and arbitration processes, and collective agreement interpretation.
- Review and monitor trends regularly and make recommendations based on data for continuous improvement.
- Build positive, professional relationships with union and association partners.
- Mitigate legal, reputational, and organizational risks through sound advice and practices.



Responsibilities

Labour Relations Leadership

- Provides expert advice on collective agreement interpretation, employment legislation, and HR policies.
- Leads resolution of complex labour relations issues, including discipline, accommodations, performance management, and workplace conflict.
- Leads and manages the collective bargaining process, including preparation, negotiations, and implementation, as well as contingency planning for job action.
- Manages the grievance process, providing advice at Step 1 and Step 2, arbitration and board of reference preparation, negotiates settlements, and manages data for trending and reporting.
- Leads development of the labour relations/collective bargaining strategy.
- Builds constructive and collaborative relationships with unions and associations.
- Conducts labour relations research and, in partnership with legal, keeps the organization abreast of changing legislation and case law applicable to HR, ER, and LR.

Investigations & Risk Management

- Oversees workplace investigations into misconduct, harassment, discrimination, and other workplace concerns.
- Provides advice, coaching, and frameworks for Labour Relations Advisors, HR Advisors and system leaders conducting investigations.
- Ensures processes are timely, fair, compliant, and consistent across the system.
- Monitors grievance and investigation outcomes to identify risks, trends, and recommend proactive strategies.

Advisory & Partnership

- Serves as the escalation point for LR/ER issues raised by Labour Relations Advisors, Manager, HRAS, Senior HR Advisors and HR Advisors.
- Partners with the Manager, HR Advisory to provide seamless and consistent LR support to schools and service units.
- Coaches system and service unit leadership in effective employee and labour relations practices.
- Develops and delivers training sessions, tools, and resources on collective agreement changes, performance management, conflict resolution, investigations, and other ER/LR matters, as required.

Team & System Contributions

- Provides direct supervision, coaching, and development for Labour Relations team.
- Strengthens LR capability within the HR Advisory group through ongoing mentorship and shared case review.
- Presents at internal hearings and prepare briefing notes where required, for Superintendent and Trustees.
- Supports Legal with preparation for arbitration hearings, Boards of Reference, Human Rights hearings, and other litigation as needed.
- Ensures all LR practices align with equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging (EDIB) principles.
- Contributes to workforce planning, change management, risk analysis, and system-wide HR initiatives as a member of the HR leadership team.
- Provides support for HR/LR/ER policy review and development.



Qualifications

Education and Experience:

- Bachelor's degree in Human Resources, Labour Relations, Business Administration, or related field; advanced degree or law degree preferred. Certification as a Human Resources Professional (CPHR) preferred.
- Minimum 10 years of progressive HR experience, with significant focus on employee and labour relations in a public sector, multi-union environment.
- Minimum 3 years leadership experience, including supervision, coaching, and development of HR or LR professionals.
- A combination of related education and relevant experience may also be considered.
- Demonstrated experience leading complex workplace investigations.
- Proven track record managing grievances, arbitrations, and collective agreement interpretation.
- Strong knowledge of labour and employment law.

Demonstrated Skills and Competencies:

- Self-starter with ability to build the function from the ground up.
- Sound judgment and analytical decision-making.
- Strong conflict resolution and negotiation skills.
- Ability to coach and influence senior leaders with confidence and credibility.
- Proven ability to develop staff and build team capability.
- High integrity, professionalism, and discretion.

Compensation

A competitive compensation package will be provided including an attractive base salary and benefits. Further details will be discussed in a personal interview. Relocation assistance is available for the right candidate.

Express Your Interest

Leaders is committed to supporting diverse working environments. We seek applicants who will strengthen our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion. We strongly encourage qualified candidates from Indigenous, Black and other racialized communities, 2SLGBTQI+ people, individuals with disabilities and other members of marginalized communities to apply for our roles. Email a cover letter and tailored resume (one document) to apply@leadersinternational.com, attention Shalini Bhatta or Chelsey Howarth, and indicate the job title in the subject line.

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